



Results of Nationwide Undercover Survey Released

The Federal Trade Commission released its 2003 nationwide undercover survey of stores and theaters, or “mystery shopper” study. The survey was conducted to collect data on the extent to which retailers prevent children from purchasing entertainment products that have been rated or labeled by entertainment industry self-regulatory associations or entertainment producers as potentially inappropriate for children. Commission staff, through a contractor, recruited 13 to 16-year-olds unaccompanied by a parent to attempt to purchase movie tickets, movies on DVD, music recordings, and electronic games at 899 theaters and stores in 39 states. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at the Department of Justice funded the survey.

Table 1: Intersurvey Comparison

Was the shopper able to buy the product or admission ticket? (Percent “Yes”)

Entertainment Product Type	2003 Survey Results
Movie Theater Ticket	36%
Electronic Game	69%

Table 2: Availability of Rating Information/Age Question Results

The teen shoppers also noted: 1) whether the store or theater had signs, posters, or other information to inform customers about the rating system or the seller’s policy on rating enforcement; and 2) whether the cashier or clerk asked the shopper his or her age before purchase.

Entertainment Product Type	Does the venue provide information about ratings or ratings enforcement? (Percent “Yes”)	Did the cashier or clerk ask the child’s age? (Percent “Yes”)
Movie Theater Ticket	62%	48%
Electronic Game	27%	24%

Documents relating to the Commission’s review of the marketing of violent entertainment products to children are also available from the FTC’s Web site at <http://www.ftc.gov> and from the FTC’s Consumer Response Center, Room 130, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20580. The FTC works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop, and avoid them. To file a complaint, or to get free information on any of 150 consumer topics, call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1877-382-4357), or use the complaint form at <http://www.ftc.gov>. The FTC enters Internet, telemarketing, identity theft, and other fraud-related complaints into Consumer Sentinel, a secure, online database available to hundreds of civil and criminal law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad.